

Andrea Castilla; Denise Cohen; Austin Davis; Thomas Day, Jr.; Christiana Duarte; Stacey Etcheber; Brian Fraser; Keri Galvan; Dana Gardner; Angela Gomez; Rocio Guillen Rocha; Charleston Hartfield, a police officer off duty; Chris Hazencomb; Jennifer Topaz Irvine; Teresa Nicol Kimura; Jessica Klymchuk; Carly Kreibaum; Rhonda LeRocque; Victor Link; Jordan McIllood; Kelsey Meadows; Calla-Marie Medig; James "Sonny" Melton; Patricia Mestas; Austin Meyer; Adrian Murfitt; Rachael Parker; Jenny Parks; Carrie Parsons; Lisa Patterson; John Phippen; Melissa Ramirez; Jordyn Rivera; Quinton Robbins; Cameron Robinson; Tara Roe; Lisa Romero-Muniz; Chris Roybal; Brett Schwanbeck; Bailey Schweitzer; Laura Shipp; Erick Silva; Susan Smith; Brennan Stewart; Derrick "Bo" Taylor; Neysa Tonks; Michelle Vo; Kurt von Tillow; and Bill Wolfe.

These are the 58 people who lost their lives from gun violence in my district in Nevada; 58 more reasons why we shouldn't stand silent, but we need to take action now.

□ 1015

RECOGNIZING NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION'S AIRCRAFT OPERATIONS CENTER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. ABRAHAM) for 5 minutes.

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring attention to the critical and lifesaving work being done by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Aircraft Operations Center.

On September 23, I had a front row seat flying into the eye of Hurricane Maria as it headed toward Puerto Rico and the coastal United States. I rode through the hurricane aboard a NOAA P-3 Orion operated by the highly specialized workforce of the NOAA Commissioned Officer Corps, civilian technicians, meteorologists from NOAA, and others, who have safely navigated these hurricanes for decades.

The P-3's instruments collect and transmit realtime weather data from storms far out to the sea back to the mainland. This data is critical for hurricane forecasters used by the American public and emergency managers.

Providing the most accurate forecasts of hurricane track and intensity, as early as possible, is the focus of these flights. Whether a strong hurricane directly hits a major U.S. city or weakens and spins out to sea with minimal impacts is a question that can impact billions of dollars and thousands of lives. These flights are vital to protect our Nation's lives and property.

In addition to the P-3 hurricane hunter I flew in, NOAA also has a G-IV jet that goes high above the storm. The

specialized instrumentation on NOAA hurricane aircraft provides critical storm data. The dual-channel tail doppler radars provide three-dimensional views of the storm.

These advanced technology tools make NOAA's fleet a critical resource to safeguard lives and property when hurricanes threaten our shores. There is no doubt that this has been a challenging hurricane season for the country, with Hurricane Harvey's flooding in Louisiana and Texas, Hurricane Irma impacting Florida, and Hurricane Maria devastating Puerto Rico. NOAA's aircraft have performed tirelessly throughout these events. Over a 4-week period, two NOAA hurricane aircraft flew over 300 hours and dropped over 500 weather probes into these storms.

After the hurricanes pass, NOAA's work is not done. NOAA's fleet of light aircraft perform poststorm damage assessments, taking high resolution images that enable limited emergency response resources to be delivered to the most critical areas.

NOAA's King Air aircraft emergency response efforts to Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria have resulted in more than 1.7 billion requests for damage assessment images. In total, more than 65,000 images were collected, covering more than 24,000 square kilometers of impacted areas. Think about that. These images allow emergency managers and the general public to be able to flee quickly, to react quickly, and to assess quickly in these impacted areas.

NOAA's light survey aircraft also perform a diverse set of missions, including river and snow pack surveys essential for flood forecasts and water management; coastal mapping required for safe maritime navigation by commercial, military, and recreational sectors; and fisheries assessments.

NOAA's aircraft are responsive and flexible, able to deploy at a moment's notice in support of national disaster response. NOAA aircraft provided critical data and support on scene following the Deepwater Horizon event and over the skies of New York after Hurricane Sandy. NOAA aircraft provide data critical for public safety, economic, and national security.

The NOAA aircraft fleet, the NOAA Commissioned Corps, and NOAA civilians are an invaluable natural resource, and it is one that we have a duty to maintain. These crews and aircraft require regular updates, readiness training, and technology enhancements that directly benefit us and our country.

I look forward to working with my colleagues and the President to ensure that NOAA aircraft fleet has all of the resources they need to safeguard lives and property for decades to come.

PUERTO RICO NEEDS HELP

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. ESPAILLAT) for 5 minutes.

Mr. ESPAILLAT. Mr. Speaker, imagine waking up with no lights, imagine waking up with no running water, you cannot bathe yourself, you cannot feed your children, you get so desperate that you break into chemically contaminated water, into untreated sewage water, you are on dialysis, Mr. Speaker, and there is still no electricity, or you are running out of medication and supplies in hospitals that are very low.

What I am describing to you, Mr. Speaker, is not a dream. It is a living nightmare, and it has been a living nightmare in Puerto Rico for over a month. For over 4 weeks, while we now begin to focus and speak about tax reform and how this Congress attempts to assist the 1 percent—the wealthiest, the well-heeled—with a handsome tax break, with the elimination of the estate tax, when we attempt to shelve, to forget, to turn our head on this nightmare unfolded in Puerto Rico, it continues to be a living nightmare.

That doesn't stop there, Mr. Speaker. Puerto Rico could lose funding also for thousands of low-income housing units if power to the island isn't restored soon. The Department of Housing and Urban Development, which subsidizes 203 housing projects on the island, is prohibited by law from providing Section 8 assistance to buildings that are not decent, safe, and sanitary.

Every day that Puerto Rico goes without resources, potable water, medication, and electricity, the situation becomes more dangerous and the death tolls continue to go up. This has now become, Mr. Speaker, our Caribbean Katrina.

The official death toll reported by the government increased today to 49 deaths, but many folks fear that it is much higher than that, after confirming a death due to leptospirosis. According to the CDC, leptospirosis is a bacterial disease that affects humans and animals. Without treatment, this disease can lead to kidney damage, meningitis, liver failure, respiratory distress, and even death. To date, the island has reported 76 possible cases of the disease. Investigative reporting from various sources have tallied up deaths to potentially north of 450 people. As of Friday, October 6, at least 14 people have committed suicide in Puerto Rico. They are traumatized and in distress. This is our Caribbean Katrina. A list of 113 people remain missing after Maria's passage.

I was just in Puerto Rico for the second time this past week with Congressman LUIS GUTIÉRREZ. The Congressman and I helped distribute supplies and necessities to Comerio, a small town in a remote part of Puerto Rico.

Puerto Rico continues to need help. It needs to be woken up from this living nightmare. S.O.S. S.O.S. Get resources to them now. It is our Caribbean Katrina. Let's own it. Let's resolve it.